



**Embassy of the United States of America**  
Port Louis, Mauritius  
PRESS RELEASE

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**Mauritian Participants win three seats at prestigious Young African Leaders Reunion Seminar**

**Port Louis, September 20, 2013:** Three Mauritian alumni of the United States President's Forum for Young African Leaders (PFYAL 2010) alumni, Joëlle Rabot-Honoré, Diana Bablee and Jonathan Ravat, were selected from applicants across the continent to participate in the very first Young African Leaders Reunion Seminar scheduled to take place from Tuesday, 24 September through Friday, 27 September, 2013 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

The *2013 Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) Reunion Seminar*, a signature U.S. government engagement with Africa, is a two day conference that will bring together approximately 45 Young African Leaders. This seminar provides alumni with an excellent opportunity to continue their growth as prominent leaders among their community, exchange ideas with other Young African leaders, and expand their network of fellow leaders to continue the growth they have already helped spur in Africa. This program will connect Young African Leaders from each of the three years of President Obama's Young African Leaders Initiative in order to foster investment, social responsibility, and innovation in Africa.

Head of the Humanities Department at the Cardinal Jean Margéot Institute, Jonathan Ravat is also a dedicated social worker, member of the National Economic and Social Council, President of the Commission for Social Affairs and Human Resource Development. Jonathan is currently finalizing his doctorate in Social Anthropology and Culture. For Jonathan Ravat, *"this Reunion will be another opportunity for me not only to network but also to learn from other leaders' perspectives, experiences and expertise; with friendship and cooperation. It will allow for a complementary sharing of knowledge and know-how from world social and youth leaders. Subsequently, I expect to get back to Mauritius, being more convinced, trained and consolidated, and to continue to bring my contribution in poverty alleviation, misery eradication and social evils prevention."*

Archivist at the National Archives, Diana Bablee, is also an IVLP (International Visitors Leadership Program) alumna. She participated in IV program *"Cultural Heritage Preservation"* in 2008. She served as Chairperson of the National Heritage Fund from 2006 to 2009 and actively participated in the inscription of two national heritage sites on UNESCO's World Heritage List (Le Morne Landscape and Aapravasi Ghat). Regarding her participation in the PFYAL in 2010, Diana says: *"I was profoundly touched to be selected to be part of the group of young Africans to meet with President Obama and grateful to him and the U.S. Government for providing us with the opportunity to dream of a beautiful future for our continent. The meeting with the friends*

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*from the continent was a great motivating factor as well; they are all wonderful in their respective ways and involved in actions that were bringing some positive transformation in the countries where they are based in. Faith, hope and belief fuel our motivation. It is a constant battle, on a daily basis, to move beyond external and self-imposed limits.”*

After following a course in Social Leadership and studying Social Work at the University of Mauritius, Joëlle Rabot-Honoré launched in 2006 two community-based organizations to meet the needs of people in the community with the collaboration of other leaders of Barkly. As Field Coordinator for the Collectif Urgence Toxida (CUT), an NGO involved in the field of Harm Reduction, Joëlle Rabot-Honoré manages field projects and is responsible for the training, supervision and follow up of the work of about 60 outreach workers. About the YALI Reunion Seminar, Joëlle says: *“My participation in the Young African Leaders Initiative Reunion Seminar will give me another opportunity to meet all those young leaders who through their actions in their respective field are making a difference in their country. I think that following the President's Forum with Young African Leaders in 2010, this meeting will be another occasion for all the delegates to share their experiences and best practices and consolidate our network for future projects.”*

The Obama Administration's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) is a signature effort to invest in the next generation of African leaders. Nearly one in three Africans are between the ages of 10 and 24, and approximately 60 percent of Africa's total population is below the age of 35. President Obama launched YALI in 2010 to support young African leaders as they spur growth and prosperity, strengthen democratic governance, and enhance peace and security across Africa.

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